

Nehls	Ryan	Thompson (CA)
Newhouse	Salazar	Thompson (MS)
Newman	Sánchez	Thompson (PA)
Norcross	Sarbanes	Tiffany
Norman	Scalise	Timmons
Nunes	Scanlon	Titus
Oberholte	Schakowsky	Tlaib
Ocasio-Cortez	Schiff	Tonko
Omar	Schneider	Torres (CA)
Owens	Schrader	Torres (NY)
Palazzo	Schrier	Trahan
Pallone	Schweikert	Trone
Palmer	Scott (VA)	Underwood
Panetta	Scott, Austin	Upton
Pappas	Scott, David	Valadao
Pascarell	Sessions	Van Drew
Payne	Sewell	Van Duyne
Pence	Sherman	Vargas
Perlmutter	Sherrill	Veasey
Perry	Simpson	Vela
Peters	Sires	Velázquez
Pfleger	Slotkin	Wagner
Phillips	Smith (MO)	Walberg
Pingree	Smith (NE)	Walorski
Pocan	Smith (NJ)	Waltz
Porter	Smith (WA)	Wasserman
Posey	Smucker	Schultz
Pressley	Soto	Waters
Price (NC)	Spanberger	Watson Coleman
Quigley	Spartz	Weber (TX)
Raskin	Speier	Webster (FL)
Reed	Stansbury	Welch
Reschenthaler	Stanton	Wenstrup
Rice (NY)	Stauber	Westerman
Rice (SC)	Steel	Wexton
Rodgers (WA)	Stefanik	Wild
Rogers (AL)	Stell	Williams (GA)
Rogers (KY)	Steube	Williams (TX)
Rose	Stevens	Wilson (FL)
Rosendale	Stewart	Wilson (SC)
Ross	Strickland	Wittman
Rouzer	Suozzi	Womack
Roy	Swalwell	Yarmuth
Ruppersberger	Takano	Young
Rush	Taylor	Zeldin
Rutherford	Tenney	

NOT VOTING—10

Bice (OK)	Higgins (LA)	Roybal-Allard
Boyle, Brendan	Jackson Lee	Ruiz
F.	Jordan	Turner
Case	O'Halleran	

□ 1804

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended as to read: "A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to make free National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes available to members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, a motion to reconsider is laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE
RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aderholt	Hagedorn	Nadler (Jeffries)
(Moolenaar)	(Reschenthaler)	Napolitano
Aguilar (Leger)	Horsford	(Correa)
Fernandez	(Jeffries)	Payne (Pallone)
Auchincloss	Katko	Porter (Wexton)
(Moulton)	(Malliotakis)	Pressley (Hayes)
Barragán (Beyer)	Kelly (PA)	Rush
Carson	(Keller)	(Underwood)
(Butterfield)	Kirkpatrick	Sánchez (Higgins)
Carter (TX)	(Stanton)	(NY)
(Nehls)	Kuster (Clark)	Scott, David
DeSaulnier	(MA)	(GA)
(Thompson)	Lawson (FL)	(Cartwright)
(CA)	(Evans)	Steube
Fallon (Jackson)	Levin (MI)	(Timmons)
Fulcher (Meuser)	(Raskin)	Vela (Correa)
Gaetz (Gosar)	Loftgren (Jeffries)	Watson Coleman
Grijalva	Maloney,	(Pallone)
(Stanton)	Carolyn	Wilson (FL)
Green (TN)	(Velázquez)	(Hayes)
(Reschenthaler)	McEachin	
Greene (GA)	(Wexton)	
(Gosar)	Meng (Jeffries)	

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized on his reservation.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, today there have been a number of items that people on our side have been concerned about with respect to the Speaker's order with respect to masks.

We all understand the importance of safety and keeping people healthy, but the orders that came out today put some concern into our staff members about what they can choose to do and empowering and putting our police in a tough spot of figuring out what to do to enforce these orders.

So part of the question here is an important one, and we don't want to head out into August with this hanging over the head of the police and our staff. That is why I have been objecting and forcing some more time.

At this point, I am going to go ahead and move on and withdraw my reservation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman withdraws his reservation of objection.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 4502, LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT, FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT, INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, TRANSPORTATION, AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2022

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of H.R. 4502, the Clerk be authorized to correct section numbers, punctuation, spelling, and cross-references, and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the actions of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the title of H.R. 2278 is amended.

There was no objection.

REMEMBERING SENATOR MIKE
ENZI

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember former Senator Mike Enzi of Wyoming.

Senator Enzi was an exemplary statesman. Whether promoting a responsible budget as chairman of the Senate Budget Committee or fighting for Wyoming's energy sector, he was always putting Wyomingtonites first.

He was a dedicated public servant, having served two terms as mayor of Gillette, time in the Wyoming legislature, and four terms in the Senate.

Senator Enzi was a problem solver, always willing to work with others to get the job done. In his 24 years on Capitol Hill, he had more than 100 of his bills signed into law by four different U.S. Presidents.

He was a man of great faith and greater compassion. His kindhearted ways made an impact on every individual he met.

I had the privilege of traveling with Senator Enzi, a brother Eagle Scout, to numerous National Scout Jamborees.

Senator Enzi lived his life staying true to the Scouting principles of duty to God, duty to country, and service to others. He will be deeply missed.

My heartfelt sympathies go to Diana, the Enzi family, and his friends.

DROUGHT IN THE WESTERN
UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAHELE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with Mr. NEWHOUSE and my colleagues to discuss the catastrophic drought situation facing the Western United States.

In my home State of Arkansas, we usually have plenty of water throughout all four seasons, but the West is different.

As the lead Republican on the House Natural Resources Committee, I have heard personal accounts from folks across the West about the crippling effects of the Western drought both in the past and the present. This map shows the vast majority of the West is under severe drought.

While we can certainly take short-term action to mitigate drought, we must ask ourselves two questions to solve this issue long-term. First, how did we get here; and, next, how can we avoid another situation like this one?

Before we answer these questions, some important context is necessary. Decades ago, water engineers understood that the arid West would remain dry and its rivers went through boom and bust cycles of floods followed by intense drought.

Under the initial direction of President Teddy Roosevelt, who signed the landmark Reclamation Act of 1902, dams were built to capture water in wet times for people to use during the dry times. Major metropolitan areas like Los Angeles, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, and Denver, would not exist today if it weren't for these projects. Consumers nationwide still enjoy the fruits, nuts, and vegetables produced by these waters.

Yet, starting in the 1970s, serial litigants began weaponizing a series of well-intended laws to curtail these projects. The Endangered Species Act has been the particular weapon of choice for many of the organizations that are actually headquartered in the cities created by water projects.

□ 1815

Not only did litigation compromise existing projects, but it also prevented us from building additional dams. Our current policies failed to measure accountability and results for environmental actions, and our bureaucracy has a paralysis-by-analysis approach when it comes to building new dams. We put a man on the Moon in shorter time than it takes just to study a new dam today.

Our California Republican colleagues did something about this. They authored, along with Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN, an innovative law signed by President Obama in 2016 that streamlined the dam studies and facilitated construction. The Trump administration then moved at a record pace to finish the never-ending studies on potential dams throughout the West.

But today, the other side of the aisle is blocking the reauthorization of that critical law and is halting progress on a process that provides an all-of-the-above strategy to water supplies.

The drought is not only having impact on water supplies for our communities, but it is also making a terrible situation even worse in our poorly managed forests. Every night we see

the newscasts about raging forest fires that are destroying communities and scorching habitat for endangered species like the northern spotted owl. For months now we have sounded the alarm, only to be met with inaction from both the administration and our Democrat colleagues.

While water may not be abundant out West, it is abundantly clear the administration has no plan. In contrast, we do. We have the Resilient Federal Forests Act, the Trillion Trees Act, the reauthorization of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, and bringing balance to the Endangered Species Act, to name a few, so we can avoid the next drought.

We have the ability to overcome and avoid droughts, but we must have the political will to act. The American people deserve nothing less.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, joining my colleagues concerned about drought conditions ravaging America and wildfires devastating my district and the West.

Whether it be northern Minnesota, California, Oregon, Colorado, or Idaho, we have a wildfire problem. The Superior National Forest in my district is boreal forest land nestled among thousands of acres of lakes and rivers.

With these water resources, wildfires should be few and far between. Instead, we are seeing new fires starting and expanding more frequently than ever.

Our hotshot teams and firefighters are doing an excellent job, but they fight a losing battle just like they do out West.

According to my good friend and one of Congress' foremost leaders on wildfire issues, Representative LAMALFA, there are three factors causing fires: topography, weather, and forest management. Humans can control only one of those, and that is forest management.

Our loggers do an excellent job when they are allowed. They take down dead trees, clear slash piles when possible, and benefit forest health by working collaboratively with other stakeholders to plant three trees for every one taken, when they are allowed.

But far too often they aren't allowed. Radical activist groups sue at every turn when our loggers are trying to clear trees.

Democrats continue to insist that more and more Federal lands be taken away from management, and instead they let fuel build up on our forest floor.

Meanwhile, the ongoing drought crisis suffocates everyone. In northern Minnesota we have farmers driving a day's journey to spend too much on hay just so their livestock can survive one more year.

I feel for my colleagues out West, too, as they struggle with drought-caused water shortages.

Instead, activists, once again, sue at every turn and lobby their Democrat

party allies to shut down responsible stewardship of water in the West.

And what has the Democrat majority done? Nothing. Not a single hearing on drought or wildfire held in the Natural Resources Committee or in the House Agriculture Committee.

There have been no Democrat solutions offered, only silence. At best, we get the canned talking points on why logging is bad for the environment or why we need to stop managing our land.

And on the other hand, Republicans have offered solutions and provided resources to our constituents struggling with drought and wildfire.

As a vice chair of the Congressional Western Caucus and ranking member of a House Natural Resources subcommittee, I can say that I am proud of our Republican actions. We have introduced legislation that would empower forest management and deliver water, our most precious resource, to those that need it in the West.

We have held the administration accountable on their inaction by sending letters and grilling radical nominees opposed to any kind of development. We have moderated forums and listened to the needs of those who live and work in the affected communities.

Mr. Speaker, let's control what we can control.

Just listen to our resident forester, Ranking Member WESTERMAN: We need to manage our forests, and that means our loggers clearing trees. It is good for our economy, our community, and our forests. We need to provide water resources so our Western agriculture producers can survive.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. STAUBER for his leadership on the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources and his participation in all the things we work on trying to do conservation through the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ), whose district has been greatly affected by drought. He is the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife. He is a water lawyer. He has got experience both firsthand and academically.

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, the problem is drought, and the problem is currently being suffered by some 70 million people across the Western United States, including many in my district.

Reservoirs, creeks, springs, and wells are going dry, leaving fish, people, wildlife, homes, and agriculture without water.

Republican Members have been working hard to bring attention to this issue. We organized a Republican water forum where we spoke with expert witnesses from across the West who are dealing with this issue every day. They are the ones from the communities directly affected.

This problem does not exist in a vacuum. Drought makes wildfires far more severe, and severe wildfires destroy watersheds, in turn making us even more

vulnerable to drought. This horrific cycle will only continue until we find a better way to manage our forests. I think Ranking Member WESTERMAN's forest resilience bill takes a huge step in that direction.

My district right now is experiencing the third largest wildfire so far in the State's history. It has burned some 400,000 acres and is now only 56 percent contained.

Some of my colleagues here are facing equally dangerous, destructive wildfires in their own districts, all worsened by the drought.

The effects of this drought are devastating. Crops die in the fields, entire herds of cattle are being liquidated, trees and shrubs die from lack of water, home wells go dry, businesses leave, and communities are devastated. We need to do something.

Briefly, I want to talk about the drought in the Klamath, which is in my district. I spoke earlier this summer about the situation and how the Bureau of Reclamation announced that earlier this year for the first time in the Klamath Project's history, there would be no water allocation to its largest part.

This decision to allocate all of the water that the farmers had stored for their use instead to in-stream use is devastating to the people who live in those communities. Their livelihoods depend upon having adequate water.

But this is, in the Klamath, a regulatory drought because there is sufficient water in a lake that if shared would have at least offset some of this damage. This illustrates the challenge posed by the Endangered Species Act, which was the foundation for the decision by the Bureau of Reclamation to allocate all of the water to in-stream and in-lake purposes, with none of the water going to the farmers.

I have asked the Secretary of the Interior and other Department of the Interior officials repeatedly to allocate at least a small part of the 350,000 acre-feet of water to the project. Those requests have been denied.

This denial has not only harmed the farmers. It has also harmed waterfowl who reside in a refuge in the center of the project. Last year we had more water than we do this year, and even then waterfowl suffered devastating botulism outbreaks. This will happen again this year and, sadly, this is totally preventable if at least a small part of the water was allocated to the district.

The short-term solution would be a financial relief package that Representative LAMALFA and I are working on. I do hope that we will be successful in getting that passed. The long-term solution, though, is to engage in far more careful storage of water and utilizing other means of conservation and finally bringing balance to the Endangered Species Act.

I would like to thank Ranking Member WESTERMAN for organizing this Special Order hour to bring attention

to this incredibly important problem in the West. It is time for both parties to put politics aside and get to work on this issue.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and for his work and for his solutions approach to what we can do to intervene in these drought situations.

Next I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. OBERNOLTE), who is no stranger to dry conditions and to the effects of drought.

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the serious problem that is occurring in my district and across the American West with conditions of extreme drought. This is certainly not a new problem for us in the West and, certainly, not a new problem for us in California, but it is being particularly acutely felt. This is a problem that only our governmental intervention can solve.

Mr. Speaker, since 1970, the population of my home State of California has roughly doubled, and yet we have built essentially zero new water storage projects. So what we have in California is not so much a problem with inadequate water, but a problem with inadequate water storage. The blame for that can be shared across all different branches of government over the last 50 years.

In fact, since 2014, money has been appropriated in California for the construction of new water storage projects, including innovative projects like the Sites Reservoir that would add over a million acre-feet of water storage to California, but unfortunately none of those projects have been built.

Solving this problem is going to require an all-of-the-above stance towards accepting solutions from all different branches of government. That includes environmentalists, but it also includes projects like water storage. We are going to need to examine every single aspect of this problem to come up with solutions.

Madam Speaker, I am also very concerned that we have been inadequate in our provision for not just water storage, but water treatment in my home State of California.

We need to examine many more comprehensive solutions for treating the water, the wastewater that currently exists, to get that back into our water supply rather than letting it run out into the ocean or pumping it to other parts of our State, which is what happens in many parts of my home congressional district.

Only we in Congress, working in conjunction with State and local government, can solve this problem. I am hopeful that as our attention turns to infrastructure we will not forget about the need for water infrastructure in our country, and particularly in parts of the West that are so severely affected by this drought.

We need more money for water storage projects, but we also need money for water treatment. I urge this body to act on this very important issue.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. OBERNOLTE for bringing his expertise in water to the House floor.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE), the chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus, someone who is no stranger to agriculture, no stranger to drought, and certainly no stranger to the importance of water.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. WESTERMAN for partnering with the Western Caucus to try to bring some attention to this really critical issue for our States out West and for all of our communities. So thank you very much.

Water. It is perhaps our most vital resource in the American West, and unfortunately all of our States and our communities know all too well what the impacts are of severe drought and water shortages.

□ 1830

With over 90 percent of the West in a catastrophic drought, the Biden administration and House Democrats have truly failed to act.

As chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus, I represent Members whose districts, like my own, are literally running out of water, water that is used to produce food to feed the world or to generate clean and renewable energy, water used to nourish our lands and our environment, water to cook and clean and to drink. We can no longer sit idly by as this historic drought ravages our communities.

In April, the Biden administration announced the formation of an interagency working group tasked with finding solutions to address the drought that plagues the West. This working group, led by the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, has yet to provide clear objectives or produce any sort of plan.

Earlier this month, members of the Western Caucus and Republicans from the House Natural Resources Committee sent a letter to the administration calling on them to provide to us the solutions and the ideas that they have for relief from the drought's impacts. As of this date they have not delivered.

So as drought conditions become more common, we must find modern solutions. For over 30 years—well before my election to Congress—as a farmer in the Yakima Valley, as a State legislator, and as director of the Department of Agriculture for the State of Washington, I have worked in partnership with State, local, Tribal, and national leaders to bring forth collaborative solutions that improve water storage and delivery in my home State of Washington. I am proud of that work, but we have much to do.

As we continue developing and deploying water conservation efforts, certainly there is more work that needs to be done. We must find short-term as well as long-term solutions to address this issue that threatens our economies

and our environment and truly our way of life.

Drought is not a partisan issue, and I urge the administration and my colleagues, my Democratic colleagues from the other side of the aisle to acknowledge the West's urgent needs and to work with us to provide actual relief, not just talk to our communities who truly are struggling.

I thank Mr. WESTERMAN of the Natural Resources Committee for drawing attention to this critical issue, for shedding some light on it, and, hopefully, by educating more people as to the seriousness of this critical issue we can truly make some progress in bringing some solutions forward that will help people all through the Western United States.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman again for his leadership on the Congressional Western Caucus. I thank him for the solutions-based approach he takes to problems, whether it is drought or other issues that we face with natural resources across the country. Hopefully, we can continue to work together and to bring more people in across the aisle that recognize that we do need to have action. Talking about things in D.C. don't solve farmers' problems in Washington State. It doesn't fix forest fire problems across the West and across the country. We need to talk and come to solutions and take action. So I do appreciate the gentleman's work.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. BOEBERT), who also lives in a place that is very prone to fire and is subject to drought.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. It is an honor to serve on the House Natural Resources Committee with you.

Madam Speaker, the West is currently burning to the ground. We are seeing historic wildfires, meanwhile the House of Representatives, the people's House, is arguing over mask mandates and passing dead-on-arrival budgetary bills.

Ninety-three percent of the West is under severe drought, and it is past time we pass legislation that would provide effective solutions that our constituents are calling for on a daily basis.

That is exactly what I have been working toward. In March, I was proud to introduce the Western Water Security Act. This legislation protects Tribal groups, farmers, ranchers, agricultural districts, towns, small businesses, and other water users who rely on privately held water rights that have been put in jeopardy by the Federal Government. Instead of joining my bill to ensure these protections, Democrats are trying to curb cow flatulence; that is right, cow farts. That is their priority. The lack of leadership by House Democrats is totally unacceptable.

And here is what I mean by that.

Under President Trump, the historic multi-State Drought Contingency Plan was implemented which, among other

benefits, prevented water cuts and rationing while protecting the water levels of Colorado's two largest reservoirs.

Under President Trump, the Federal Government implemented Title Transfer authority, getting Federal water facilities transferred to local, more capable water suppliers.

And under President Trump, Republicans fixed Obama's WOTUS regulations, providing water security to ranchers and farmers across America.

In contrast, under the Biden regime, we have seen bureaucrat laziness 101. An interagency working group was formed. Yeah, whoop-de-do. How is that working for anyone? What have they done? No one knows. Since April, my colleagues and I have questioned the Biden regime's appointees and received no concrete answers or responses that were promised.

And there are more appointees that are waiting for confirmation, like the potential head of the Bureau of Land Management. The woman who will be the director of the Bureau of Land Management is a known ecoterrorist.

This is all terrible. And this is all under the Biden regime. This regime is failing the American people, and the cost is far too high.

I urge my colleagues to join my Western Water Security Act and let us begin to protect private property rights, and our water rights, while ensuring an abundant supply of clean water for future generations.

Madam Speaker, we need to drain the swamp, not our reservoirs. I thank Ranking Member WESTERMAN for yielding me this time and for leading on this important issue.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for reminding us that we do need to have our priorities in order, that there are important things that we are failing to address here in Congress.

We are getting ready to break for the August break, and nothing will have been done to address wildfires or drought. I don't think that is what the American people deserve, nor what they want. It is a lack of priorities and a lack of leadership.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), who understands agriculture because he is a farmer. He understands drought because he lives in California. He understands abundant water supplies because of where he lives in California. And he also understands catastrophic wildfire and how that is related to lack of management.

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. WESTERMAN for his work on the Natural Resources Committee where I was for several years, as well as working with the Western Caucus on this, as well.

Obviously, it has been underlined during this time tonight that we are in a severe drought situation. The darker the color on the map the more severe that area is. So my part of California is the portion right here at the border

here. Oregon is in that corner. So you see the dark brown is the Klamath Basin. My colleague, CLIFF BENTZ, spoke about that a little bit also on how dire that situation is.

You see all over the map here that the whole West, much of it is in that brown color, called exceptional drought, and the orange area is called extreme drought.

So what do we do about these situations? We must be proactive.

In California—and I will talk a lot about California—but also that is of interest to the whole country because so much of the crops that so many of the people in this country use come from California.

We have had leadership in the past that produced the Federal water project known as the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project that California did. Two of the biggest dams there are 4½-million and 3½-million acre feet by themselves. Now, an acre foot is 326,000 gallons. An acre foot is enough to take care of two households or approximately 10 people for a year.

And so we used to build these projects because we were forward thinkers then. And that water benefited so many of us. But when we talk about the drought situation, it also affects not just people and food supply and the water supply, but also as my colleague and I, Mr. BENTZ, we share that area on the Oregon border where is the Klamath Basin is.

So what does that mean for wildlife when we don't keep track of our water supply, we don't put it where it is the most beneficial? You get a situation like this. This is a refuge for ducks and other waterfowl that is going to be dry this year.

Last year I was up there on a trip and during the year they had the deaths of 60,000 ducks and other waterfowl due to botulism because the water is so low, and it gets that disease in there and wipes out the flock which affects the whole Pacific Flyway.

So this isn't just about farms and food and money and this and that. This is also about habitat. But the only habitat you hear about in California is such that might help the fish, the salmon or the sucker fish in Klamath Lake. The sucker fish do not sustain themselves by a full lake on that lake; indeed, it needs to be lower. And they have been trying to run water down the Klamath River in order to wipe out a virus—it is kind of a mold—by keeping it wet in order to help the salmon.

And we see this also in the delta that flows through the bay area from those great watering sources that come through the Sacramento Valley and the San Joaquin Valley. They are wasting so much water running it through there trying to help the delta smelt. So much water is gone, and the smelt, when they do a trawl, a survey, they can't even find any more with the extra water that has been run through there for 30 years.

So what are we going to do? Why does this matter to all Americans? Well, certain crops, 99 percent, come from California, such as almonds, artichokes, celery, figs, garlic, raisins, kiwi, honeydew, nectarines, olives, cling peaches, pistachios, plums, sweet rice, and walnuts. You are not going find those easily imported from somewhere else—or at least of the quality that Americans are used to—if we don't fix our water situation in the State of California, either due to environmental and regulatory concerns or building more storage. We should be doing both. We need to be fixing the regulatory problems because the Endangered Species Act has been weaponized against things that work for people.

We need to pause for a minute and see if these things that we are doing are even helping environmentally, even helping the fish populations, and they are not.

This year the lakes will finally run out. In 2022, all bets are off because Lake Oroville is so low. Lake Shasta is pretty low. We won't have the water supply. You can forget agriculture. We know that they will. Agriculture seems to be the last in line for anything in California. But the urban areas are going run out before too long.

Can you imagine trucking water into the urban areas? Can you imagine trying to set up temporary desal plants along L.A.? They have been trying to build a desal plant in Huntington Beach for 20 years, and the environmental groups put the brakes on that all the time. It is amazing. They are cutting their own throat.

So when are we going to get focused on what works for people and their food supply and the domestic wells? Thousands of domestic wells are going dry around California, and we haven't even seen the full effect of this year when many thousands more will go dry.

What do you do for those folks? Hey, forget agriculture, it isn't important. We will just import the food. Like imported oil was so great and imported electricity. No. We have to be thinking a lot more because the environmental movement has decimated this.

Let's talk about forestry for a moment, all those overcrowded forests create their own drought, and they also don't let the water supply that would normally come down through the system and hit our lakes, it doesn't get there anymore because we have an inventory of 10 to one what we should be having in our forests

So we have got a lot of work to do. We have to reform the Endangered Species Act. We have to reform the NEPA process to be able to get projects done and still take into account what we can do positively for the environment. We will still do that.

Fish benefit from dams, yet all you hear about is tear the dams out. Whether it is up in Washington for Mr. NEWHOUSE or my district and Mr. BENTZ's district, that seems to be the big push.

Where are we going to get this water supply? How are we going to have water for fish in order to have it go down the streams to the fish each year when you don't have the dam there because it is all gone in a short amount of time after the rain stops?

□ 1845

We have to get our heads back together on how things really work. We are not going to have a food supply. We are not going to have a timber supply—because it is all burning right now—until we get past having the Endangered Species Act and the environmental organizations rule what we do in this country.

Madam Speaker, we have to get serious.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BUSH). The gentleman has 27½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield to another gentleman from California, who certainly understands agriculture, and he understands drought conditions, water management. He is also a farmer.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my frustration with the majority's unwillingness to get involved in drought recovery and prevention in the Western United States.

I am frustrated that my colleagues in the majority care so little about real people suffering from a lack of water. Some of my constituents have been forced to bathe with bottled water. Some of my constituents have been forced to abandon entire fields of crops because they simply don't have enough water for them. Some of my constituents can't drink the little water they have in their wells because the water contains arsenic and isn't safe to drink.

Madam Speaker, this isn't a looming crisis. We are in the middle of a crisis. I am here today with several of my colleagues in the minority, most of which that hail from the Western States, and I know they share the same frustration as me.

We have repeatedly called for hearings to be called on the Western drought, with no answer from the majority. We have tirelessly written letters to Biden administration officials and Western Governors requesting help, with no backing from the majority. We have introduced bills and put forward amendments to help prevent future droughts, with no consideration from the majority.

Madam Speaker, how many times do we have to tell our colleagues in the majority that my constituents and the constituents of many of my colleagues here today are hurting?

We are tirelessly trying to bring action in every way possible. We just ask that you work with us to get it done. This shouldn't be political. This is about real people and the desperate need for access to clean and reliable water.

Madam Speaker, this isn't the first time you have heard from me on this issue, and it certainly will not be the last.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, and I also agree with him that we haven't taken action.

D.C. is fiddling while the West burns again. Here we are, getting ready to break for August recess with nothing to show, nothing to tell the people in the West on what is being done to mitigate these wildfires, to mitigate the drought.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS), who just got the VIP Act passed earlier today.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, the ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee, Representative WESTERMAN, both for yielding and also for all of his diligent efforts in helping us pass the Alexander Lofgren VIP Act.

Madam Speaker, our Nation is in crisis. Right now, over half of Iowa is experiencing a moderate to extreme drought. This dire situation is mirrored around the country, with thousands of counties across the West experiencing historic drought conditions. This situation has a widespread impact on our way of life.

For my constituents, it means our farmers and ranchers must fight even harder to make ends meet after this pandemic.

As drought conditions worsen, so does the cost of irrigation. Less water means less yield, less in their pockets at the end of the day, and less in the ground for the next year.

For our fellow Americans out West, not only does this drought harm farmers and ranchers, but the real threat of wildfires is made dramatically worse by the lack of moisture.

Madam Speaker, this is shameful and avoidable. The government cannot make it rain, but it can and should plan for the future. Republicans have consistently advocated for increased water storage and regulatory streamlining, which would help conserve water for the dry years. These measures have been largely opposed by our Democrat colleagues.

Now, as we move into August experiencing another major drought season, this majority and this administration have no plan, no solution, and have taken no action to prepare for the next drought season.

Madam Speaker, not only is there no plan, but this current administration is actively making it more difficult for Iowans to access the water they need.

During his confirmation hearing, EPA Administrator Michael Regan

stated that the Biden administration doesn't "have any intention of going back to the original Obama WOTUS."

Unfortunately, on June 9, the EPA announced its intention to revise the definition of the waters of the United States once again and reopen the Navigable Waters Protection Rule. This decision is misguided and undoes the good work and progress achieved by the Trump administration.

I have spoken with Iowans dozens of times about the issues created by the 2015 WOTUS rule. WOTUS hurts American farmers, ranchers, landowners, homebuilders, businesses, and just the average, ordinary property owner. It has caused confusion and hindered economic development.

By reopening this rule, the Biden administration once again threatens economic development and creates uncertainty for rural America.

Madam Speaker, creating this uncertainty, especially during this drought crisis, is a mistake. We should uphold the Navigable Waters Protection Rule and ensure that all Americans have straightforward access to the water they need to thrive and especially to survive.

Thank you to the ranking member of the Committee on Natural Resources, Representative WESTERMAN, for organizing today's Special Order to highlight this ongoing crisis.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for highlighting how the drought is affecting the Midwest, not just the West, and for pointing out that our colleagues across the aisle and the administration not only have not taken any action and don't have a plan; they also won't listen to us who have plans, who want to take action.

That is why we are here, why we are making this case that we have to take action. We can't just stand by and not try to do anything to help.

Again, I thank the gentlewoman. She passed a bill with 420 votes affirmative and 0 against. I think she knows how to work in a bipartisan manner, and she wants to do solutions to help people.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE), another freshman Member from the West, who certainly understands drought and natural resources.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas.

My bill this week was about 415-0, so I also know how to work in a bipartisan manner. I think that is probably what I appreciate the most about your leadership on the Committee on Natural Resources, the recognition of the long-term challenges that we have but being able to come up with real solutions for the short term.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to continue the conversation that many of my colleagues have highlighted from their own individual districts. Coming from Utah, we are experiencing the worst drought in our modern history.

Madam Speaker, 99.9 percent of Utah, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, is experiencing extreme drought. The entire State is under this.

The impact of this crisis cannot be overstated. The lack of water will reduce food and jobs and increase the frequency and size of wildfires. Unfortunately, our agriculture sector is bearing much of the brunt of this.

Farmers and ranchers in my State and district have had to reduce their water use by 70 to 75 percent compared to 2020 numbers. This will increase food prices for years to come, but it will also decimate rural economies, which hurt our State and our Nation.

The scope of this issue is magnified by the rapid population growth taking place in the West. In Utah, the population is expected to double by 2065. Increased water demand will strain our water infrastructure and could cripple economic expansion.

We must pursue creative water policies that allow us to respond to the crises of today while preparing for the challenges of the future.

I am proud of the great work being done by State leaders in Utah and in our Western States that are working toward this very goal. Here in Washington, we must carefully consider ways we can streamline, improve, and update laws and regulations that make it difficult for States to build the water infrastructure projects they need to meet our ever-increasing demands.

As this issue intensifies, it is incumbent upon us to give this crisis the attention that it deserves, to collaborate and to work toward a solution that can enable our communities to prosper in these difficult times.

Madam Speaker, we owe this to our constituents, our districts, and our States.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Utah. I turn now to California, an area of California that is very dry, an area that has experienced a lot of forest fires. From talking to this gentleman, I know that a lot of those forest fires can be prevented, that we could have an abundance of resources, yet we seem to waste and mismanage these resources.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I will speak on a related matter, and that is how our Forest Service approaches fire in our densely overcrowded and drought-stricken forest.

Madam Speaker, on July Fourth, lightning struck a tree in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in Alpine County, California, starting a small fire that smoldered just over a quarter of an acre of rugged terrain.

Now, instead of immediately attacking this fire, the U.S. Forest Service decided to monitor it instead—that is to say, to do precisely nothing.

On July 16, 12 days later, that small fire of a quarter of an acre, now called

the Tamarack fire, exploded out of control. It has now consumed 70,000 acres as of this writing. One of the towns in its path is Woodfords, California.

In 1987, the Woodfords Fire Department responded to a report of fire on Forest Service land near their town in the same forest. They, too, were turned away. In fact, Federal officials threatened Woodfords' residents with arrest for even trying to extinguish the small blaze.

Hours later, that fire exploded to 6,500 acres, costing 25 families their homes. Apparently, the Forest Service has learned absolutely nothing in 34 years.

This let-burn policy of Federal land managers began back in 1972 during the height of the radical environmental movement. It stems from the premise that fire is nature's way of cleaning up forests and that active suppression of fire leads to a buildup of excess fuels.

That is right, as far as it goes because an untended forest is just like an untended garden. It will grow and grow until it chokes itself to death and will ultimately be consumed by catastrophic fire. That is how nature gardens.

The U.S. Forest Service was formed to remove excess growth before it can burn and to preserve our forests in a healthy condition from generation to generation.

In California, active land management reduced acreage that was annually lost to wildfire for more than 4 million acres a year in pre-Columbian times to just a quarter-million acres during the 20th century.

Federal foresters marked off excess timber and auctioned it to timber companies, which paid the Federal Government for harvesting rights.

Environmental laws adopted in the 1970s now require years of environmental studies at a cost of millions of dollars before forest thinning can be undertaken. That essentially brought the era of active land management to a halt.

The result? California's wildfire damage has returned to its prehistoric level, more than 4 million acres lost to catastrophic wildfire last year. You see, nature is a lousy gardener.

In 1988, when the Federal let-burn policy produced the disastrous Yellowstone fires, President Reagan reversed it. "I did not even know" the policy existed, he said. "The minute that this happened out there and Don Hodel went out, he made it plain that, no, we were withdrawing from that policy." That is what President Reagan said.

Unfortunately, Reagan left, and the policy returned. The devastation that it has caused since then is tragic, avoidable, and incalculable.

Especially given the hazardous conditions of today's forest, sensible policy would give top priority to extinguishing the small fires before they can explode out of control into mega-fires.

Scrambling to explain their obvious dereliction of duty, Deputy Forest Supervisor Jon Stansfield complained

that they just didn't have the resources to put out the small fire when a water drop by helicopter could have stopped it cold.

Yet, they had the resources to photograph it by helicopter, and they had the resources to do countless airdrops after they had allowed it to explode out of control.

□ 1900

Now, the Federal Government owns 96 percent of Alpine County, leaving it with virtually no tax base and entirely dependent on tourism attracted by the national forest. The fire has not only taken people's homes and destroyed their businesses, but it has severely damaged the forest resource that Alpine County's entire economy depends on for tourism.

It is dangerous nonsense to monitor incipient fires in today's forest tinderbox, even if they seem to pose no immediate danger. No person in his right mind would monitor a rattlesnake curled up in his bedroom because it isn't doing much of anything at the moment. He would kill it before it does.

In our national forests, only the Forest Service can prevent small blazes from becoming forest fires, and it is about time they did.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership in the past in getting bipartisan legislation in place.

I remember a couple of years ago I was out around South Lake Tahoe and I saw the fruits of the efforts of Representative MCCLINTOCK, working in a bipartisan manner with many groups, to do the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, part of what was in the bipartisan WIIN Act.

And I felt proud as an American from Arkansas to be in California and seeing the forest actually being managed and knowing that it was my colleague, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, that pushed for that. And more of that needs to be done, enough of it is not happening. We need more land that gets treated like that. It looked like a park. From a forestry perspective, I would have maybe taken a few more trees out, but it was way better than what was left around it and it is making great progress, and that is because of solutions-based approaches to getting the job done and making a difference out on the ground.

But we have got 80 million acres of forest land in this country that is subject to catastrophic wildfire. When you mix that with the drought conditions that we are seeing today, Madam Speaker, it is a recipe for disaster.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK talked about a lightning strike that was left to burn, when it could have been put out early. We see massive destruction. We are seeing that in eastern Oregon, and we will continue to see it. We are seeing one of the worst wildfire seasons that we have ever seen.

I think Americans need to understand how important healthy forests

are to good watersheds. Teddy Roosevelt knew that. He talked about the importance of developing the West and protecting the watersheds and the timber in the upper parts of the watersheds, because that timber acts as a filter. It acts like a sponge that holds water and releases it slowly so that you don't get all of it running off at one time.

We have these massive forest fires, next comes the flooding and the landslides and the degradation to our streams. We want to help species like the Chinook salmon. But when we are washing the topsoil into the streams, that is not helping any kind of fish.

We let wildfires burn right down to the edge of the stream. If we were doing forest management, we would thin the forest. We would be the gardener and the caretaker. We have solutions. We have proposed legislation but, unfortunately, Congress has failed to act. Not only has Congress failed to act, but Congress has failed to be able to come together and talk about these issues, and we need to do that.

I hope that over this August recess my colleagues across the aisle will have a change of heart, so when we get back here in September, these bills will come to the floor, and we will do real bipartisan work that is good for the environment, that is good for the economy, and that is good for America. We stand ready to do that.

Republicans are ready to work for the good of America—for rural America, and we want to make a difference. We invite our friends across the aisle to join us.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, we are here today to call on the President, to call on the House, to call on the Senate to pass immigration reform. We hope to see immigration reform in reconciliation.

We are here to tell the stories of why we must do this, of why we must do this not just for the immigrant community, and not just because it is the right thing to do, and not just because of the stories of each of those families who put their lives on the line, who study, our DACA, our Dreamers, our

essential workers, not just for each of them. We are calling for immigration reform because it is good for America.

And we must move beyond the rhetoric of division. We must move beyond the rhetoric of hate. And we must move to the facts. And when we move to those facts, we know and we learn that immigration reform is good for this country.

I often talk about the fact that we need to ignore those who would divide us. Those who would seek to demonize another for political gain. Because we know in New Mexico, especially, we know that there is no other, there is only an us. No hay un otro, solamente nosotros.

And when we look at some of these numbers, we recognize that. When we notice that immigration reform will bring a \$1.7 trillion benefit to our economy, that it will raise annual wages for everybody by \$700, that it would create 438,000 jobs for Americans, there is an economic reason for doing this beyond the sense of who we are, our humanity, and who we are as a Nation of immigrants.

This issue affects every community in our Nation. And it is so important in my own community that the first meeting I had after I was elected was with Somos Un Pueblo Unido. We Are a United Community. Somos Un Pueblo Unido.

And it was wonderful to have that meeting, because I heard directly the voices of my sisters who were undocumented. I heard their voices tell the story of what it was like to work, tell the story of what it was like to be exposed to COVID, but they knew they had to go back to work because they did not have a choice. Because they did not have any other way of providing for their children.

They put themselves in harm's way to care for us. They put themselves in harm's way to make sure that our grocery stores were stocked. They put themselves in harm's way to make sure that our elderly were cared for. They asked me a favor, they said, Senora Congressista, we ask that you will take our stories to Washington, D.C., that you will take our stories and use your voice there to repeat them. And so my voice right now is not mine, it is theirs.

Today, we stand in the people's House and use our voices to share the community stories, to highlight the benefits of immigration reform, and hopefully, hopefully, to get closer to making it a reality.

There are an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States, they are the Dreamers who we have talked about. They are undocumented students, children, adults, who have only known this country as their home, they have U.S. citizen family members. As noted, they are caregivers, healthcare workers, education, and small business owners.

The immigrants in the United States are a reflection of us. They do the